LABOUR MONTHLY

EDITOR R. PALME DUTT

NOTES OF THE MONTH
R. P. D.

SICILY AND THE SECOND FRONT
Ivor Montagu

SERVICE PENSIONS
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CAN THEY QUENCH VOLCANOES?
Quæstor

HOUSING—IN WAR AND PEACE
J. R. Campbell

TRADES UNION CONGRESS
Peter Kerrigan

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P. C. Joshi

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SICILY AND THE SECOND FRONT

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AUGUST 1943

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

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Vol. XXV. No. 8

CONTENTS

August, 1943

	Page
Notes of the Month—*The Communist Congress* by R. P. D.	225
Sicily and the Second Front by IVOR MONTAGU	233
Service Pensions by WILLIAM GALLACHER, M.P.	236
Can they Quench Volcanoes? by QUAESTOR	239
Housing—in War and Peace by J. R. CAMPBELL	243
Trades Union Congress by PETER KERRIGAN	247
The Kayyur Heroes by P. C. JOSHI	250
Engels on Guerilla Warfare	253
Book Reviews by BRIAN BOROUGH and FRANK VERULAM	255

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

The New Offensives—Urgent Tasks—Communist Congress—A War Congress—Democratic Programme for Victory—War and Post-War—Two Generations—Representative Strength—A United Congress—Main Decisions—The Second Front—Speed or Delay—No Relaxation—Defeat the Fifth Column—Production and the Trade Unions—The Home Front—Preparing Post-War Advance—Socialist Aim—Unity of the Labour Movement—The Communist Party—The Call to Action.

THE short-lived "lull" in the war has ended. Offensive action is renewed. The new Nazi offensive against the Soviet Union on the Kursk front opened on July 5. The Allied invasion of Sicily opened on July 10. Already it is clear that in the first round of the heaviest armoured battle in history, on the Kursk-Byelgorod front, a signal victory has been won by the Red Army, which is moving to the counter-offensive. The first stages of the Sicilian landing and invasion have gone through with brilliant success. Great prospects and great responsibilities now open out before us. The crucial character of the battles developing is evident. The campaign in Sicily marks an important step forward towards the aim of combined operations West and East, and towards the decisive breach of the European fortress. All efforts need now to be extended towards fullest support for speed and success with a view to the most rapid advance to the cardinal objective of the full two-front war in Europe with the united offensive strength of the main forces of the United Nations.

WE must be on our guard against over-estimating the initial successes won. These initial successes, the demonstration of the strength of the Allied forces in action, and the first breach in the outlying regions of the European fortress, have stimulated a spirit of mounting confidence in the nation. But they have also given rise to renewed illusions in some quarters that victory can now be taken for granted, and that the enemy is about to crack. Before we throw our hats in the air, we must soberly measure up to the job before us. The main Nazi forces have still to be met and defeated by the combined blows of the main armies of the United Nations; their principal basis of power in Europe is still unbroken. They have some three hundred divisions in arms; according to the latest reports, 211 divisions on the Eastern front, and 91 in the rest of Europe. We are still only on the fringes of our task. Any slackening plays into the hands of the Fifth Column, on whose potent aid Nazi calculations still place their hopes. Never was it more necessary to rouse and heighten the all-out effort of the nation, alike military, and in the sphere of production, and in the political sphere, to respond to the urgency of the present hour.

IT is in the light of this war situation that the proceedings of the Communist Party Congress on July 3-4, as of every party conference and political activity in the present period, need to be reviewed. The Congress met on the exact eve of the new offensives. What contribution had the Congress to make to the united war effort and to the political tasks of the mobilisation of the people for victory? The urgent practical issues raised by the new offensives become now the test of the effectiveness of the Congress decisions. The same stern test which we applied last month to the Labour Party Conference needs to be applied this month equally to the Communist Party Congress.

LAST month we saw that the Labour Party Conference achieved a positive outcome in its overwhelmingly united affirmation of national unity for

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victory over Fascism, its rejection of all proposals to break the electoral truce, and its recognition that the electoral truce did not mean a political truce, that the labour movement had a political campaigning role to play. We saw that the main weakness lay in the complete isolation from the present issues of the war, the failure of any concrete political leadership on present issues, and the consequent rejection of working-class unity because of the lack of any burning sense of urgent present issues requiring the combined strength of the movement. How far did the decisions of the Communist Party Congress succeed in filling this gap?

DID the Communist Congress give plain, positive and concrete leadership for the present war situation? This question can be answered unhesitatingly in the affirmative. The Congress did place in the forefront the actual military situation and the responsibilities standing before the British people to-day. The proceedings of the Congress covered a wide range. All the questions of the war —military, strategic, diplomatic and political, no less than the problems of production, coal, the harvest, the war organisation of industry, wages policy, rationing, servicemen's conditions, the war effort of women or the needs of young workers— were seen as the direct concern and responsibility of the working-class movement and democratic opinion. They were seen in the light of the present, and also in the light of the future. Thus the questions discussed were the concrete questions which are before the British people to-day, and on which the Government is shaping policy. But every question, whether military, political, social, economic or post-war, was seen in relation to the paramount immediate aim of speediest victory over Fascism, which finds expression in the central task to-day of the organisation of the Second Front in Europe. No secondary issue, no social or economic issue, no post-war aspiration, was allowed to take precedence of this main military task which stands before the people to-day. Every discussion was conducted in the light of this burning sense of the urgency of the war situation. This was the first positive achievement of the Congress, marking it out from every other political conference at the present time.

THERE was no question of formal lip-service to the cause of victory, while evading the practical problems for its achievement. There was no question of relegating to one side the hard military, strategic or production problems as a sacred preserve of hidden mysteries for the ruling class to settle, while the labour movement should regard its function as only to confine its attention to home social and economic issues, ignoring the war, or to post-war dreaming. Such a servile division of functions did not enter into the outlook of this Congress. While leaving full and proper place to the realm of the experts in the decision of details, it was recognised that in a democratic country the popular forces have the right and the responsibility to give their serious consideration, their expression and their inspiration to the civilian direction of the war on all the problems of the war. Hence the Congress did not merely give expression to the aim of victory over Fascism, and to the paramountcy of that aim as governing all other issues in the present situation. The Congress set itself to draw up the outlines of a democratic programme for the achievement of victory over Fascism. This was the second positive achievement of the Congress.

THIRD, the Congress saw the present struggle against Fascism in the light of a larger perspective. Victory over Fascism was seen as the indispensable road forward in order to build on the basis of the democratic anti-Fascist struggle, to advance to the aim of a new and better Britain, to establish new condi-

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tions of international co-operation, and to go forward to the final goal of the socialist reconstruction of society. This unity of purpose and perspective gave unity to all the manifold issues discussed by the Congress. At the same time the vision of the future was not allowed to obscure the tasks of the present. On the contrary, the future was seen as growing out of the present. The present tasks were stressed, not only as indispensable for immediate urgent needs, but at the same time as pointing the way, preparing the conditions and strengthening the forces for future advance. Thus in the sphere of those issues on which there is great controversy and confusion at the present moment, on the relation of the present war tasks and post-war aims, the Congress was able to give a unity of leadership and plain answers which showed the way forward for the working-class and the people alike in the present situation and in preparation for the future. This was the third positive achievement of the Congress.

THIS positive character of the leadership and policy of the Congress was reinforced by the character of its representation. Press comment, even from organs hostile to the general viewpoint of Communism, was unanimous in bearing witness to the impression of youth, strength and vigour of the 406 delegates to the Congress, picked out through keenly contested elections from the 60,000 members of the Party. The average age of thirty-three years reflected the dominance of key workers in war industry, typical of the general composition of the Party. Nearly two-fifths of the delegates (38 per cent.) were between the ages of twenty and thirty years, and just over two-fifths (41 per cent.) were between thirty and forty years, thus constituting four-fifths between twenty and forty years of age.

THIS age difference, contrasting with the marked elderly character of the composition of the Labour Party Conference, emphasises from another angle the need of working-class unity. For what was here revealed was a difference, with the danger of a growing separation, of two generations. Such a separation is only to the disadvantage of both sides. The ripe experience, the close knowledge of administration and deep local roots of many of the delegates to the Labour Party Conference need to be yoked with the youthful energy, vitality and enthusiasm of the delegates to the Communist Congress. Both elements are essential in a strong and well-balanced movement, capable of leading the entire people.

OF the 406 delegates to the Communist Congress, three-fifths were industrial workers, who had come to participate in the strenuous two days of the Congress week-end directly from their jobs in the armament and aircraft factories, in the pits, on the docks, in railways and transport, or in building. Ninety-eight per cent. (399 out of 406) were organised in trade unions, and seven-tenths were co-operators. A little over one-quarter (106) were women. The majority had been over five years in the Communist Party. Here was thus a representative composition, and the authentic voice of an important key section of the working-class. Here was the powerful answer to all attempts to deny or belittle the just role of Communism in the counsels of the working-class or in the building of its common achievement.

WHAT some critics have singled out as a defect of the Congress was, in fact, an evidence of its strength—the final unanimity in the decisions reached. For here was unity reached by the completely free democratic processes of discussion and voting; based on no other methods than persuasion and conviction. This democratic unity was a tri-

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umphant answer to the robot unity of Fascism, or orders issued from above to a membership without right of expression. Even the limitations on full democratic working, characteristic of many of the traditional organisations of the movement, were here completely removed. There were no block votes, no hammering of minorities, no casting of votes by a few officials on behalf of large bodies of members who had had no opportunity of expressing their opinion. The members of the old Central Committee had no voting rights. The 406 rank and file delegates, chosen on a basis of absolute arithmetical equality of representation from the membership, were sovereign. They had the power to make any decision of policy they thought fit by majority vote. In the individual secret ballot for the new Executive Committee they could have turned down the entire old leadership, had they so wished. Every amendment and suggestion for the resolutions on policy, no matter whether coming from a strong organisation, a small group or a single individual, was carefully considered in commissions of rank and file representatives chosen from each of the twenty districts, and was discussed directly with the mover with a view to reaching agreement on the result; and the majority of the proposals were incorporated, in whole or in part, in the final outcome.

THE ultimate unity was thus the outcome of a complete democratic process. That such complete unity in the final decisions could be reached, under conditions of such complete untrammelled freedom, was an expression of the political maturity, the basic unity of theoretical outlook, and the sense of collective responsibility of the membership. It was a signal vindication of democracy, a demonstration that steel unity of the working-class vanguard can be attained through full democratic forms, thus answering, not only the mechanical corpse-like regimentation of Fascism, but also its false assertions of the supposed incompatibility of democratic methods with efficient unified organisation in action. Such harmonious unity of thought and action, attained at present by the working-class vanguard, but capable of extension to ever wider sections through democratic processes and developing experience, is of profound significance for the future of democracy.

WHAT, then, were the main lines of the policy put forward by the Congress? First, on the war. The keynote was struck in the first sentence of the main report: "The Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party will be judged by its positive contribution towards a speedier winning of the war and of the peace"; and by the subsequent declaration that "all the pre-requisites now exist for the opening of the Second Front in Europe"; that "everything now depends upon how quickly the United Nations are able to take full advantage of the new favourable situation that has developed as a result of the recent victories of the British, American and Soviet armies by the organisation of the Second Front in Europe"; and that "the organisation of the Second Front in Europe this year could lead to an early victory, and consequently a reduction of the sacrifices on the part of all the United Nations."

THIS central immediate objective of an all-out combined offensive strategy of the United Nations by the speediest organisation of the Second Front in Europe, which has constituted the pivotal issue of the world situation now for twenty-five months, ever since the establishment of the British-Soviet Alliance, and has been consistently emphasised by the Communist Party, was presented in a new light in the context of the new phase of the war that has now developed. A year ago the Second Front in Europe was still, in fact, a controver-

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sial issue, despite formal official declarations that were subsequently explained away as a bluff, and was met with opposition arguments in many high quarters. To-day the objective is universally recognised; the question is one of speed of effective action. A year ago the material and technical possibility of such a Second Front, whether in respect of available trained armed forces, equipment, planes, guns, tanks or shipping, was widely disputed. To-day the facts, which were plainly set out in the Congress proceedings, no longer admit of dispute.

BUT the issue is not thereby finished; nor was the Congress forcing an open door. The issue has changed its form. The issue is now between the aim of immediate full-strength action of the main Anglo-American forces against decisive Nazi forces on the Continent of Europe this year, to fight alongside the offensive of the Red Army; or the conception of a gradual delaying strategy, which should still be satisfied to leave the main brunt of the Nazi forces to fall upon the Soviet Union for the third year in succession, and to leave the peoples of Europe to be ground down under Nazi oppression for another winter. The danger of this delaying strategy, which, presenting itself in the guise of caution, is, in fact, the opposite of a safe strategy, still needs to be more widely understood. It is more necessary than ever to rouse the nation to the sense of urgency in relation to the opportunities of the present war situation and in relation to the critical situation in Europe.

WHAT is the main hope of the Axis in the present situation, when the prospects of military victory can no longer appear to them bright, when the overwhelming superiority of the United Nations is indisputable, but when they still manifestly count on finding the way to reverse the situation, or, at any rate, to prevent a decisive military victory of the United Nations and thus to be able to resume the conflict under more favourable conditions at a future date? Mussolini's speech on June 24 provided a pointer, when he declared, as an answer to "doubters," that "this war has developments which cannot be foreseen, developments of a political nature." The Roosevelt-Churchill declaration to the Italian people on July 16 provided the effective answer to these speculations of Mussolini and his lieutenants, with its firm call for unconditional surrender and for the ending of "the Fascist regime."

BUT there is no doubt that, whatever the further developments which may follow in Italy, the main Nazi leadership still hope to find their way out through dividing the United Nations; to be left free for a third year to turn their main forces against the Soviet Union, with consequent further heavy losses in blood, resources and in the populations of the occupied territories for the Soviet Union; to carry forward their accelerating policy of extermination against the militant forces of the European peoples; to maintain their main basis of power in Europe, whatever the losses on the fringes; and thus, through the consequent heavy prolonged conflict, with weakening of the European nations and war-weariness of the peoples, to reach a situation in which they can build golden bridges to their friends in the West for a compromise settlement.

IT is against this strategy that speed of action is of such decisive importance, equally for the European nations under the heel of Nazism, for the Soviet Union, whose emphatic warnings and declarations have been increasingly repeated in the recent period, and for the interests of the British and American peoples. We cannot afford to live in a roseate fool's paradise of victory expectations, while ignoring plain facts under our noses. Recent reports from France are grave; and

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the warning given by the French fraternal delegate to the Congress that the best forces of French resistance are now being lost, and that the friendship of the French people for Britain and the United States is beginning to weaken, owing to the disillusionment of repeated disappointed expectations, needs to be taken seriously. We cannot afford to underestimate the strength of the Fifth Column, whose operations through all the subterranean by-ways of European and world politics are now more active than ever, and whose open sabotage in the United States (race riots, political blocking tactics, provocation of strikes) works to undermine the Allied cause. Victory will not fall into our laps, but needs to be won by the uttermost effort, as well as tireless and vigilant democratic leadership, in every sphere.

HENCE the importance, emphasised by the Congress as an essential part of the strategy for victory, of strengthening in every way the democratic anti-Fascist unity of the United Nations; of combating the Fifth Column and pro-Fascist propaganda, including the penetration of pro-Fascist influence into the leading circles or entourage of any of the Allied refugee governments; of strengthening the links with the French Committee of National Liberation; and of overcoming all reactionary policies, as in India, which hinder the mobilisation of the peoples for victory. Hence equally the importance, greater now than ever, of strengthening national unity; and in this connection the proposals of the Congress for overcoming the present unsatisfactory situation in respect of by-election policy, in such a way as to make every by-election an emphatic declaration of national anti-Fascist unity, have won wide attention.

SECOND, the Congress dealt with the problems of war production, with special emphasis on coal, the harvest, and on the methods of strengthening the operation and representative character of the State Controls in relation to war industry. Under the title "Build the Unions for Victory and Reconstruction" the Congress adopted a far-reaching programme for all the problems of trade union policy in the present war situation. This programme, taken in conjunction with the previous party memorandum on Trade Union Policy, constitutes the most comprehensive statement that has been attempted to tackle in a positive and constructive fashion the manifold new problems which have arisen for trade unionism under the conditions of a democratic anti-Fascist war, with the enormous extension of the field of productive industry and extension of trade unionism, with changes in the technique and organisation of industry and in the relations of the State and industry, with an elaborate new system of wartime industrial legislation and methods of wage regulation, with the widespread entry of women into industry, with the extended role of workshop organisation in association with the unions, and many associated new features, giving rise to new problems, dangers, opportunities and responsibilities. Here the key conception of uniting the maximum effort for war needs with strengthening the unions and the working class for post-war advance governs the whole approach.

THIRD, the Congress dealt with the questions of the Home Front, in respect of the varied social and economic issues affecting the living conditions of the civilian population, the servicemen and their dependents. Here also the Congress adopted a concrete and positive programme on such questions as housing, health, social insurance, education, youth needs, taxation, service pay, allowances and pensions, and civilian pensions. Here also the approach related these issues closely to the war effort, and showed at the same time how the democratic response to war needs could prepare the way for post-war advance.

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FOURTH, the Congress, on the basis of the above resolutions, was able to relate closely the practical wartime programme to post-war aims and issues insofar as they already begin to take shape in current forms. Rejecting Herbert Morrison's approach, in his speech at the Holborn Hall on June 27, when he advised Labour propagandists to spend three-quarters of their time on post-war questions, as equivalent to the advice that the labour movement should only give one-quarter of its attention to the war, the Congress opposed any separation of post-war issues in a utopian compartment away from the living issues of the present situation. On the contrary, the Congress not only emphasised that the war and the requirements of the war must come first, but showed that the measure and methods of response of the labour and democratic movement to the tasks of the war would determine the character of the post-war situation and already prepare the conditions for post-war advance. At the same time, within the framework of these basic principles of approach, the Congress gave plain and positive answers to all the questions of post-war policy insofar as they arise for solution or action to-day, whether in respect of general war aims, where controversy has arisen (e.g., in relation to Vansittartism, post-war international political organisation, international economic co-operation, etc.), or in respect to the general orientation of the movement with regard to the new problems of the State controls, the attitude to monopoly, and the economic future of Britain, or finally, and of decisive importance, in respect of the specific measures which need to be carried through now, within the framework of national unity, in preparation for post-war development.

FIFTH, the Congress set out plainly and unambiguously the aim of Socialism for which the Communist Party and the working-class movement strives, and towards whose speediest realisation it governs every aspect of its present policy. The Congress showed how the war for the military victory of the United Nations over Fascism, for the unconditional surrender of the Fascist Powers, constituted the indispensable road which the movement must travel in order to advance to the aim of Socialism; and that any talk of Socialism, which ignored the decisive immediate task of the destruction of Fascist barbarism, and the necessary conditions for the fulfilment of that task, was not only empty talk, but reactionary and a betrayal of the struggle for Socialism. The Congress showed how the path to the realisation of Socialism lay through the strengthening and unity of the working-class movement, leading the widest sections of the people, and how all our present policies and action must contribute to the fulfilment of this task.

SIXTH, the Congress dealt with the present problems of the labour movement in the light of these aims and this programme, and showed, in particular, the next steps towards the unity of the labour movement. The Congress reaffirmed the aim of the affiliation of the Communist Party to the Labour Party, on which the vote of the Labour Party Conference represented a stage and not the last word, and showed how co-operation was in practice developing and could increasingly develop in relation to the manifold concrete issues which face the movement to-day and on which there is wide common ground. It is welcome news since the Congress, and confirming its line, that the National Union of Railwaymen, at their annual general meeting, have decided in favour of Communist affiliation to the Labour Party, thus reversing the vote of nearly a quarter of a million which was cast in their name against affiliation at the Labour Party Conference, and representing in consequence a change of close on half a million

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in the proportions of the total vote of the Labour Party Conference. It is significant also that since the Labour Conference decision two leading members of the Labour Party Executive have come out publicly in favour of a wider unity of the labour movement and progressive forces, including co-operation of the Labour Party with the Communist Party.

AS an indispensable part of the fight for strengthening the labour movement and for the unity of the labour movement, the Congress showed the necessity for strengthening the Communist Party. The Congress adopted a new Constitution and Rules of the Communist Party, which serve to set out in very plain and simple form the aims and methods of the Communist Party and how it works. It was decided to inaugurate a wide mass campaign for the objects and policies adopted at the Congress to strengthen the war effort and the mobilisation of the nation, to strengthen and unite the labour movement, and to build up the membership of the Communist Party to one hundred thousand as the vital instrument for contributing to the realisation of these aims.

THE Congress emphatically rejected the demand of hostile elements for the dissolution of the Communist Party—not on the grounds of sectional interest, but on the grounds that the Communist Party had and has an indispensable and positive role to play in the common interests of the entire labour movement, and that the loss of that role would mean the weakening of the entire movement. The dissolution of the Communist International as an international directing centre, corresponding to the requirements of the present international situation, and to the present stage of the movement, with the growth of the strength, influence, experience of leadership and distinctive tasks of the Communist Parties in all the countries of the world, throws an increased responsibility on the Communist Party here, as elsewhere, within the national framework in responding to the needs of the situation, carrying forward the tasks of the working-class movement and reaching out to the widest sections of the nation. The justice of the Communist Party's claim is proved, not only by its past record and present activities, but by the proceedings of the Congress and by the guidance given through its decisions to assist in solving the problems of the working-class movement and of the wider democratic and progressive movement. The value of the Congress decisions will be tested in the coming issues and in the campaign. The urgent present war situation now opening out and the speed of events throw on us, and will throw on us, new and extending responsibilities which the Congress decisions will assist us to fulfil, but which will require ceaseless new initiative, creative leadership and unstinted effort in order to be equal to the needs of the hour.

R. P. D.

July 18, 1943.

BOUND VOLUMES 1927-1938

Readers will remember that a few months ago we asked for loose copies of back numbers of LABOUR MONTHLY in order to have complete sets bound, and we have now a fair stock of Bound Volumes for sale at 10s. 6d. each, post free. The volumes range from 1927 to 1938, but the following has been sold out: 1933.

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Sicily and the Second Front

by IVOR MONTAGU

THE Allied landing in Sicily represents an event of the first importance in the development of the war. Taken together with the frustration of Hitler's Kursk offensive by the Red Army, it trumpet-blasts the truth of Harry Pollitt's estimate at the Communist Party Congress a few days previously that to-day was the tide in our affairs which, taken at the flood, would lead to victory.

The Allied landing in Sicily blows sky-high Hitler's legend of the impregnability of Europe. The successive breaking of these legends cannot be over-estimated for the importance of their effect on enemy morale. The legend of the invincibility of German arms, broken by the Red Army first at Moscow in 1941 and finally at Stalingrad in 1942, the legend of the inviolability of German soil, broken nightly by the R.A.F. over the Ruhr, and the legend of the submarine campaign, wearing thin through the new aircraft carrier system in May-June, 1943, these have all come as successively disheartening shocks to the enemy.

The Dieppe try-out, and the unaccountable delays of 1942, lent colour to the "European fortress" legend. Now that is going too. The illusions, fostered by Axis-friends in the Allied camp to delay the offensive—insufficiency of shipping, certainty of disastrous slaughter in any landing operation—are likewise shattered.

The Sicilian operations, which have started and developed so brilliantly—about twice as fast and ten times as bloodlessly as expected by the Allied high command—as to emphasise that the strength of the Allies (in the air, on the sea, in weapons and in skilful co-ordination) and the weakness of the Axis in respect to the necessity of guarding a many-thousand-mile coastline, as well as manning the East Front, are alike far greater than many had pretended.

Big military and big political possibilities open out from the landing in Sicily. They are not separate, of course, but interlocked—military deficiencies weaken morale, moral deficiencies influence defensive factors—but for convenience they may be examined successively.

The military possibilities relate to the opening of the Second Front. *Sicily* is not, of course, the Second Front, but it establishes a situation pre-eminently favourable for it.

To get this quite clear, it is worth while reminding ourselves exactly what the Second Front is. The Second Front is not and never was—except in the falsification of certain opponents of the Second Front who desired to discredit its supporters by representing them as insufficiently appreciative of Anglo-American war activities—just simply the Anglo-American forces fighting in another place. (It is of significance that neither Premier Churchill nor President Roosevelt has ever lent the slightest encouragement to that pretence—both having stated on more than one occasion that they had not the least doubt of the meaning of the phrase.) The Second Front is an operation whereby the Allies oblige the Germans to divide their forces, to "fight on two fronts," to carry on the two-front war that successive generations of German military strategists have reckoned as their nightmare.

The simple arithmetic of the position remains exactly the same as when Marshal Stalin counted it out last November. The number of Axis divisions then on the Eastern Front was 240. The number that Marshal Stalin reckoned the Red Army could have chewed up, even in 1942, was 160—he estimated the task of the western Allies to divert some 80 (60 German and 20 satellite) in order to bring about "the beginning of the end."

The number of Axis divisions now on the Eastern Front remains approximately the same in number. The comb-out of Germany and the subject territories has replaced in number, though very likely

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not in quality, the legions destroyed in the winter fighting. Indeed, the number of German divisions has increased from 179 to 211, the number of satellite divisions has certainly decreased. In 1942 there were fewer than 80 German divisions spread thin throughout France, the Low Countries, Scandinavia, Germany itself, the Balkans. The proportion guarding Europe has not changed, except to decrease. It is doubtful whether there can be more than 60 or 70 divisions now guarding areas far more directly and extensively threatened. (As the military writer Max Werner wrote in *Reynolds News:* "Hitler lost Sicily at Bielgorod.") The task of the Allies remains to force Hitler to support and to reinforce these and to weaken his "East Wall."

The proof that Marshal Stalin has not falsely estimated the power of the Red Army to deal with the remainder lies in the Kursk fighting. For a long time interested parties have maliciously represented the Second Front as an operation in Russian interest to save the Red Army, instead of as an operation to crown the common effort with triumph in the common interest. The de Courcy Imperial Policy Group for a long time represented it as an adventure wherein we might land successfully on the Continent, for sentiment's sake, and then find our armies abandoned and isolated, as at Dunkirk, by the collapse of an ally. At Kursk for the first time in the whole course of the war, a summer offensive of the German Army has proved a failure. The force adequate to roll up Poland in 1939, Norway, the Low Countries and France in 1940, the western regions of the U.S.S.R. in 1941, the southern Russian front in 1942, has this year succeeded in rolling up exactly nothing at all. For the first time in military history the blitzkrieg has been blunted before it had even broken through.

Extraordinary efforts have been made to minimise the significance of this world-shaking event. The efforts of the Germans to conceal from its beginning the fact that they had embarked on an offensive betokened at the same time lack of confidence and a realisation of the moral effect were the extent of their eventual failure to become fully appreciated. Highly sinister are the efforts in certain "expert" quarters among the Allies to echo this belittlement.

The fact is that not all the operations of the Allies had yet forced the Germans to diminish their strength in the East. The Germans still held there much more than two-thirds of their numbers. The output of enslaved Europe in war-machines had been assembled there. The total power accumulated was as great as ever it had been; the weight concentrated on the chosen sector, including divisions, "Tigers" and "Ferdinands" was greater than ever before.

In the first five days of the offensive Hitler lost, on an average, one tank every three to four minutes and about eight planes an hour. He lost more planes per day than the maximum day's bag of the R.A.F. in the Battle of Britain. Against Moscow in 1941 Hitler used 13 tank divisions and lost 777 tanks in twenty days. Against the Kursk sector in 1943 he used 15 tank divisions and in five days lost 2,036. During the 1942-3 winter offensive of the Red Army, the Germans lost 7,000 tanks and 4,000 planes in 90 days. On the Kursk salient they lost some 3,200 tanks and 1,800 planes in nine days. Thus the rate of their losses in the fighting on the Kursk salient was almost exactly five times as intensive as during the 1942-3 winter offensive of the Red Army.

It is not necessary to speculate over-optimistically on the subsequent Soviet triumphs at Orel, or even to reckon the Germans incapable of effort in new adventures, to realise the over-all strategic significance of initial failure and frustration in an enterprise on such a scale. In his reply to Cassidy, Stalin stated that there was no reason to apprehend that, in the event of a Second Front being mounted, the Red Army would not play its part. Kursk shows its capacity to make good his words.

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For, in all our just admiration for the Sicilian operation, we should be deceiving ourselves and losing essential sense of proportion if we did not bear firmly in mind that although it brings nearer the Second Front, not even by means of Sicily have the western Allies yet contributed the Second Front.

Throughout the whole North African campaign never more than six German divisions were engaged, and in Sicily the German forces, which for the most part seem split into smaller units rather than in divisional formation, cannot amount to the equivalent of more than two or three divisions. Neither of these operations, however victorious, directly engages and diverts German strength from the Eastern Front, as, for example, attack in force in the west, with response from a population stretching directly up to and (through the prisoners and deportees) inside Germany, would do.

But it would be utter folly to fail to realise the tremendous importance of Sicily simply because it happens to be an island, not yet the mainland, and not yet the direct engagement and diversion of, in sufficient strength, the main enemy.

If one is to strike southern Europe at all, Sicily is indispensable. The route may be roundabout, but the sequence on the route is altogether logical. If invasion can be successfully air-and-sea covered from Africa into Sicily, the forces that proved adequate must be no less capable of cover from Sicily to the mainland. A foot established in Sicily is a foot holding open the door to Europe.

True that even an occupation of Italy would not in itself yet engage Hitler's forces, but it would remove the cushion. France would be between pincers, not only accessible from west and north as now, but from south as well. The Balkans would be likewise pincered, from across the Adriatic as well as from the Aegean side. Defence against attack threatened from all these directions would overwhelmingly strain the resources Hitler has retained in the West. (And south Germany would be open to a be-"ruhr"-ing by the R.A.F.)

Thus, while we must be conscious of the gap between what has yet been undertaken and what must needs be undertaken before victory can be won, we must also perceive clearly the enormous opportunities opened up by the Sicilian campaign.

We have referred to the political, as well as military, possibilities. Remember that in the Soviet winter offensive the Axis lost some 700,000 killed and 300,000 prisoners, and in Tunis some 50,000 killed and 250,000 prisoners. Remember that, whereas both Britain and U.S.S.R. in the dark days of initial Axis victories could be stayed by the comforting thought that new, as yet immobilised resources, were available across the seas to redress the balance, the Axis supporter to-day has no such hope to succour him. All the map is at war, the remaining non-belligerent corners could hardly be expected to turn the scale. In such case, all his hopes must be pinned, not to military prospects, but to political. The known factors in the field are against him. Even Goebbels can only prattle of secret weapons the nature of which are beyond imagining, and "long-term plans" so far ahead as to be out of sight. As tangible and concrete prospect remains only the hope of defection and disunity among the Allies.

Hold on, says Goebbels, they cannot land, they dare not land because we are too strong, they will not land because the circles among them who value "law and order" appreciate us and will not allow our destruction, they do not want to land because in reality they are jealous of the Bolsheviks and would like to see them ruined. Hold on long enough and they will come to terms.

Is it not plain what a direct role in disintegrating Axis resistance is played by every military operation that belies this propaganda? Each blow in concert with

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the Red Army, the spectacle of the Allies able to land, willing to land, and landing on the continent of Europe, the warning constituted by German inability effectually to protect the territory and integrity of its satellite—each adds to enemy discouragement and facilitates the subsequent follow-up operation.

Everything depends, therefore, upon swiftly completing the Sicilian operation, upon swiftly developing it and multiplying other operations.

The magnitude of the prospects opening, the scent—however distant yet—of victory, leads to a frantic redoubling of the efforts of those in the Allied camp who desire at all costs to save Fascism. The propaganda for negotiated peace as against the unconditional surrender policy takes new subtle forms of pleas for its application at least to the satellites. The deeds of Fascism are whitewashed—no newspaper in London except the *Daily Worker* gave more than a bare couple of paragraphs to the indictment at the Soviet trial of Nazi crimes, including the poisoning of thousands of civilians. Humanitarians who, like Dean Inge, encouraged the butcher Franco, discover a soft corner in their hearts for the bricks and rubble damaged by the R.A.F. M.Ps. arise to champion in Parliament the British variety of Fascist thug. In America, the equivalent of the Municheers provoke race riots, undermine the administration, inflate prices to provoke strikes, and use the strikers as pretext for legislation to provoke labour and break national unity. A school of "strategists" arises demanding that all onslaught on Hitler should cease as Europe is but a family quarrel, Hitler already so weakened he will come to "reason," and the real enemy the "yellow man," an appellation for the Japanese drawn wide enough to justify dominion over all the East.

Delay, delay, they cry. Time—and inevitable casualties and growing war-weariness are what they count on. If only, they say, we can restrict this year's allied operations to the collection of Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Crete, Rhodes, and a few other seaside places, this will exactly fit the bill.

The issue is boundless for good or evil. This summer is the time of crisis. It is in our hands to grant delay, fortify the Axis hopes, bring all—as Churchill warns—into deadly danger, or to advance—further and wider, more swiftly and more extensively—and now win.

Service Pensions

by WILLIAM GALLACHER, M.P.

THE rates of pay, pensions and allowances have been for a long time the subject of questions and, when opportunity offered, bitter criticism in the House of Commons. The soldier gets 21s. per week, with an extra 6d. per day allocated as post-war credit. If he is married or has dependants 3s. 6d. comes off the 21s. as an allotment, without which no allowance can be paid.

This leaves him with 17s. 6d. per week and puts him in a far inferior position to his civilian associates. Very often most of his wages are spent on accessories of one kind and another that should be supplied by the Army.

Of course, he may get an extra 3s. 6d. of proficiency pay, after six months' service, but this is added to his allotment. Then there are the various increases associated with promotion. In fact, it is estimated that there are 200 different rates of pay in the Army, but the basic general rate for the rank and file is, as has been said, 21s. minus 3s. 6d. for allotment.

The basic allowance for the wife, including the allotment, is 25s. with 9s. 6d. for the first child, 8s. 6d. for the second child and 7s. 6d. for the third and subsequent children. Again, there are variations and additions under certain circumstances, but this is the general rate that is paid.

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A few months ago, when we discussed this matter in the House of Commons, I drew attention to the fact that there were charitable organisations, "passing round the hat" for the purpose of caring for those who were totally incapacitated by the war. I said, "pay the soldiers 5s. per day give his wife £2 per week, for each child up to fourteen, 10s. 6d. per week; for children from fourteen to sixteen, still going to school, 16s. per week. Give the mother who has one or more of her family in the forces 25s. a week and no Means Test. This, with adequate pensions, and there will be no need to pass the hat." That is, I believe, apart from the dependants' allowance, the proposal of the T.U.C.

On dependants' allowances, the position is as follows: The amount of allowance is determined in the first place by the amount the serving soldier was contributing for the maintenance of the dependant before he was called up. Thus, if he was contributing 15s. or less, the dependant (mother, father, sister, brother or grandparent) will get 14s. including the allotment. If he was contributing 20s. or more, 22s., including allotment, will be granted. In the case of a dependant living alone the maximum allowance, including allotment, is 26s. if the soldier was contributing 24s. before being called.

Now, that looks all right when compared to the flat rate of 5s. paid to every dependant during the last war. Womersley goes into raptures about the higher amounts some of the dependants are getting whenever he speaks on the subject. But he carefully dodges the fact that while every dependant got 5s. per week during the last war, thousands of dependants are getting nothing at all in the present war. For, after the allotment has been made, the dependant has to go through a Means Test before any allowance is paid.

There have been innumerable deputations at the House of Commons, protesting about this. Mothers from London and from all parts of the country have lobbied members in an effort to get this scandal of a Means Test for the dependants of our fighting men abolished. But whatever we say, the Minister keeps on bleating that it is better than the flat rate of 5s. However that may be, it certainly wouldn't be better than a flat rate of 25s. and that is what we must insistently demand.

But there is another grievance and one that has been mainly responsible for the events leading up to the publication of the Government's White Paper.

Two years ago I raised the question of service pensions, and arising out of correspondence I had received from discharged soldiers, I asserted that while a criminal got the benefit of the doubt, in the case of a soldier, if there was any doubt as to whether his disability arose from his service in the forces, the doubt went against him.

Sir Walter Womersley indignantly denied this and was warmly cheered and supported by the Tories for so doing. But lo, the years bring changes! So we find, just a few weeks ago, the Tories in open revolt on this same question.

Soldiers passed into the Army A1 may serve six months, twelve months, or even two years. They go through all the hardship of drilling and marching—and the training is really tough going in the modern army. They may even have participated in active service, but they are discharged from the Service as medically unfit and they are then told that, as the disability wasn't "directly attributable" to his war service, he can get no pension.

Not only are these men so suffering after being discharged from our present-day Army, but there are thousands of such cases left over from the last war. Time and again cases have been placed before the Minister, time and again deputations of members have met him. Always he drew attention to the Royal Warrant (the regulations governing pensions) and his inability to go outside of it.

But the cases became so numerous and the protests became so loud, that he was

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ultimately forced to make a statement that Appeal Tribunals would be set up and all those who had been discharged from the Army on medical grounds, or who considered they were entitled to a pension would be given the right to appeal.

After long months of waiting a Bill to institute these Appeal Tribunals was brought before the House of Commons. In the Second Reading debate Sir Ian Fraser, speaking for the British Legion, sharply criticised the Bill and said it was no use while the Royal Warrant remained as it was. That, unless a statement was made before the Committee stage that the Royal Warrant would be changed, he and his friends would be forced to move substantial amendments to the Bill.

The following week the Committee stage of the Bill was taken, with nothing said about the Royal Warrant. The revolt broke out on the first amendment to the first clause, and the Government was saved from a sure defeat by Mr. Eden stopping the discussion and withdrawing the Bill for the time being.

Now the White Paper has been issued making certain changes in the Royal Warrant, which the Government hopes will damp down the revolt of the Tories and allow of the Tribunals Bill being got through with no more trouble. But the changes, while useful, and in one or two particulars representing a considerable advance, do not go nearly far enough and will leave much room for doubt on the main question—the onus of proof.

In the case of a man discharged as medically unfit, the present Warrant requires that disablement shall be either "directly attributable to, or materially aggravated by, service."

It is now proposed to delete the word "directly" and the word "materially." This means, of course, that a claimant may assert that his trouble is "attributable" to his service, even though it may not be "directly" attributable. That, at any rate, is supposed to be the wider opening offered to those who are making an appeal.

But it still leaves a serious difficulty in connection with the Bill. The first clause sets out the task of the Appeal Tribunals. Their job is to decide if the Minister, in refusing a pension, has acted correctly in the light of the Royal Warrant.

Before the change in the Warrant it is doubtful if the Tribunals could have found one case where they could have decided otherwise than that the Minister had acted correctly. It is questionable if they will be able to do much other, in view of the slight change that has been made. At any rate, it will be interesting to see, out of the thousands of appeals that will be made, in how many cases the Tribunals will decide that the Minister has not acted correctly in refusing a pension. But, of course, we may still get the Bill altered so as to allow the Tribunals to act in a much freer manner: there is no reason why they should be tied down to deciding on the actions of the Minister. At any rate, if we don't get the Bill changed it won't be for the want of trying. The White Paper, in discussing the formula, "Fit for service, fit for pension," misses the whole point. If there is, as the White Paper points out, a disablement in which service couldn't possibly have played any part, then that would be a particular case, which the Minister would have to prove. That is what is meant by the "onus of proof" being on the Government, not on the soldier. Every soldier passed A1 into the Army should be entitled to a pension. If the Government has cause to question the disability of a particular soldier, then the Government, or the Minister for the Government, would have the right of appeal to the Tribunal against a pension being granted in such a case. But unless he could prove beyond the slightest doubt that the Service had nothing to do with the disablement, the soldier would be rightly entitled to his pension.

"Fit to serve, fit for a pension" is the only just and reasonable treatment for the men and women who are giving of their best in the war against Fascism.

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Can they Quench Volcanoes ?

by QUAESTOR

MORE and more the peoples of Europe are rising to play their independent part in the great war of humanity and civilisation against the bloody Nazi juggernaut. Their inspiration is the colossal blows struck against the Germans by the Red Army and the first steps to Anglo-American re-entry into Europe, represented by the R.A.F. bombardments, the victory in North Africa and the invasion of Sicily. But it is an independent part that the European peoples intend to play, and of that there is increasing evidence.

In France the national movement of sabotage and ideological resistance is being more and more knit together in preparation for national insurrection, thanks to the growth of the Franc-tireurs and the Partisans. In Belgium, the partisan movement has also been growing swiftly in recent weeks, under the inspiration of the kindred French people. In Yugoslavia, the Partisans have definitely come to the front of the entire resistance campaign—so that the Yugoslav authorities in London have at long last squeezed out of themselves a grudging admission of the great role of the Partisans. The rapid growth of the Greek Partisans, their fusion into a national army of liberation, their support by the widespread strike movement of the Greek workers, have led the Greek King and his government in Cairo to give a series of welcome if belated pledges to abide by the wishes of the people, in the question of their form of government, directly the war is over. In Poland a guerilla movement has developed swiftly in response to the tremendous victories of the Red Army. In recent weeks it has reached such proportions that the Polish Government itself has changed its propaganda, and advertises instead of hushing up the heroic deeds of the Polish guerillas. All over occupied Europe, from Albania to Norway, these signs of mass struggle are increasing.

It would be stupid—because contrary to all experience—to imagine that such events, once they reached a certain magnitude, could find no echo in the Fascist countries themselves. Enough is known about the widespread anti-Fascist feelings of the Italian population before the war to justify expectations that the heavy military defeats which the Fascist armies have suffered in North Africa, and before that on the Eastern front and in Abyssinia, would have their repercussion at home. Mussolini himself has confirmed that in March of this year there took place in the industrial north of Italy the great strikes of which reports have come through. Since then the Italian underground movement has announced the formation of a national front of opposition to the war and to Fascism of all groups, from the Communists to the moderate Conservatives, based on the platform of the overthrow of the monarchy, the wiping out of the Fascist machine and the punishment of the war criminals among the Italian militarists, landowners and big business representatives.

In Hitlerite Germany itself there have come out into the open the first stirrings of unrest. The admissions and the threats of the Nazi leaders themselves, in recent months, would be indirect evidence, if that were needed. But the whole world knows of the executions of professors and students for anti-Nazi propaganda at Munich, and of individuals accused of "Communist activities" elsewhere. German prisoners taken on the Eastern front are telling more and more circumstantial stories of strikes against intolerable conditions in Western Germany, of mutinies of military units ordered to proceed to the Eastern front. It is not important that at this stage these outbreaks have no political programme and are confined to protests at particular hardships, like the difficulties created by R.A.F. bombardments or the tremendous depression created among the civil population by the slaughter of

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Germans in the East. The point is that once again, as twenty-five years ago, the docile Germans—who always, for historical reasons, had an exaggerated awe of authority, and for ten years have been terrorised by the Nazi gangster machine—are here and there beginning to break loose from discipline. The fact that they have among them several million prisoner-slaves, drawn from the youngest and strongest people in the occupied countries for work in the German war industries, is no longer a mitigating factor for the German people experiencing the hardships of war, now that the possibility of defeat is once again talked of; it has become, on the contrary, a further source of alarm to the many, and inspiration for the determined militant few.

This is the situation in Europe: and it is on this background that one must judge of the two tendencies, pacifist and Vansittartist, which occupied the stage for a time at the Labour Party Conference in June, and which are seeking recruits as fast as they can in the country.

To look for guidance, in appraising their importance, to the particular individuals involved, or to the sentiments which they utter, is misleading. Among the pacifists could be found the mouthpieces of Roman Catholic "Peace by Negotiation" propaganda, terrified of revolution in Europe and bitterly hostile to the Soviet Union: the surviving advocates of a "turn the other cheek" policy, which is so strong, for example, in the Women's Co-operative Guild: people, on the other hand, who fancy that it is an act of treachery to the class struggle to find themselves in any circumstances in a coalition with the capitalist class of their own country: and wishful-thinkers who imagine that just below the surface in Hitlerite Germany there is an immense organised Socialist Opposition only waiting for its chance. So on the Vansittartist side there are people who genuinely believe Lord Vansittart's "historical" researches into German psychology since the days of Tacitus; business people who are terrified of a German revolution; Social-Democratic leaders who dream of setting-up their own Government in Germany as in 1918, but with the powers-that-be of Western Europe cured of their former preference for the German Junker and militarist class; and people who, disgusted at the good-humoured toleration with which certain British official elements have watched Germans killing Russians for two years, think that one way of stirring up a little more hate of the Nazis among the British people is to support Lord Vansittart, if only for a time. All these heterogeneous elements group themselves and cluster around the two poles of pacifism and Vansittartism, and to judge their significance by their past activities or present professions alone would cause only greater confusion.

How then is their significance to be judged? To answer this, one has to ask: "Whose interests and whose requirements do they serve, irrespective of whether they want it or not?"

The answer must surely be clear—those who are afraid of the European peoples, and who only differ among themselves in either fearing that, if matters are pushed to the complete crushing of Hitlerite Germany, there will be no holding the peoples of Europe: or else in being certain that, once Hitlerite Germany is crushed, a sufficiently ruthless and determined machine can hold them down, provided the necessary propaganda and recruitment have been effected beforehand. They differ as to means: they agree in their objectives. In that respect, Vansittartism is the complement of appeasement and pacifism is its sister.

Of course, this discussion has been going on for a long time; but it has never had such a bearing on the immediate prospects as to-day. The tempo of the blows delivered by the Allies against the Fascist States is increasing rapidly. The gigantic defeat inflicted on the Germans at Stalingrad has been recognised all over the world. Yet is it not astounding that, in

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the short space of two weeks on the Orel-Kursk and Bielgorod sectors, the Red Army destroyed or disabled nearly half as many tanks (about 3,400 against 7,000) and half as many planes (about 2,000 as against 4,000) as it did during *three months* fighting between November 19, 1942, and February 19, 1943? Moreover, the last three months have seen the complete wiping out of the Axis armies in North Africa and the invasion of Sicily. The certainty that Hitler and Mussolini are about to be defeated in the not too distant future is growing. The neutral States—even the sham neutrals, like Franco Spain—are veering in their policy accordingly. There are some among the Allies who talk frankly of the Germans probably "preferring to have the British and American armies occupying their country rather than the Red Army." To take up the pacifist position to-day, whether in the sense of "pure" pacifism which neglects to mobilise every possible sinew and strength for the crushing of Hitlerism, or in the shape of the sowing of illusions about the strength of opposition in Germany, or in any other way, means to play into the hands of people of this kind.

Those who tend to fall innocently under the sway of the pacifist arguments must remember that what opposition there is in Germany can express itself, and can grow, only to the extent to which shattering blows have been inflicted on the Nazi war machine, and will be further inflicted in the coming months. It must be plainly stated that the greatest immediate danger in this country and in the United States lies not from those who are preaching Vansittartist solutions after the war, but from those whose conscious or unconscious efforts impede the quickest possible mobilisation of strength against Hitler, and in particular those whose propaganda helps the opponents of an immediate second front on land in Western Europe.

But the Vansittartist agitation, particularly that of the "Fight for Freedom" group in the labour movement which is headed by a number of Trade Union and Labour Party leaders, is also a source of great danger. For one thing, it falsifies history—by ignoring the many great struggles which the German working-class in the past carried on against the forces of militarism, imperialism, class privilege and Fascism. Secondly, it distorts the history of the last twenty-five years, ignoring the fact that the German people did revolt in 1918, and that its revolt was crushed, and its political evolution stopped and turned back during the next two years, by the direct intervention or passive assistance of the victorious Allies. The British and French Governments left the German reactionary feudal elements and militarists with sufficient arms to massacre the most revolutionary German workers, behind a screen of democracy which the Social Democratic Government leaders Ebert, Noske and Scheidemann put up, to mask their secret treaty of alliance with the militarists. Thirdly, it hides the responsibility of a large section of the British ruling class itself—that section which was dominant in the Governments of Bonar Law, Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain from 1922 to 1939—which built up German Imperialism to hold down the German people and as a barrier to the Soviet Union: a responsibility which Lord Vansittart himself shares in no small degree.

In his latest book, *Lessons of My Life*, Lord Vansittart has shown that he understands very well the realistic ultimate meaning of what some might think his fanatical and crack-brained theories. For all his talk about the German character, Vansittart suddenly admits (p. 187) that so far the German has been able to "make next to nothing of himself. He is *State*-made, and by a devilish State at that." What kind of State? Vansittart has already answered that (pp. 100-101), when writing of Kaiser Wilhelm II:—

"For all the swank and the *Es ist erreicht* moustache, he was only the

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creature of militarism, heavy industry and those East-Elbian Junkers with whom the Hohenzollern had struck an early and enduring bargain. The same evil forces, particularly the first two, made that yet louder and swankier creature Hitler."

It might seem that Lord Vansittart would draw the conclusion that the thing to do was first and foremost to ensure the utter eradication of these elements who ruled imperial Germany as they rule Hitler Germany. Indeed, he admits that, as a result of German defeat, there may be in Germany many elements "capable of a destructive revolution" (p. 70). But at this point he shows himself just as bitterly opposed to destruction of the roots of German imperialism, militarism and Fascism by German popular mass action (without which German democracy can never grow) as he was in 1919-20.

Lord Vansittart admits (pp. 71-72) that the revolt of the masses is possible, when Germany is defeated. But this, he says, is not "acceptable," because it is not "constructive." There are three kinds of "constructive" revolutions he foresees as possible—one purely militarist, which he naturally rejects as meaning another war in five years time: a second "Communist," which "obviously does not figure among our war aims"; and a third "pure Socialist" (the adjective is particularly eloquent) under which, following the Allied occupation of Germany, a "minority dictatorship" of German Socialists *might* be installed (he does not rule out the possibility) with the understanding that "the remnant of German Socialists will have to be installed and maintained by force"—until the Germans themselves might, in the course of time and re-education, "evolve something spontaneous and not unsuitable."

It is obvious that in Lord Vansittart's view, what he calls a "Communist revolution"—presumably, since he denies the existence of any strong Communist Party in Germany, meaning a popular uprising with the object of destroying the Junkers, war industry magnates and profiteer fortunes—would be eminently "unsuitable."

This is the programme which the Vansittartist agitation has in mind; and this is the reason why it attracts the most rabid of the Communist-baiters in the British labour movement and among the fragments of Social-Democratic groups from Europe living at present in Britain and in the U.S.A. In their more frank moments, some of these Social-Democratic emigrants are even more explicit than Lord Vansittart himself. Thus, one of the leading foreign Social Democrats could be heard lately explaining, to a select coterie of his admirers and subordinates: "When the Germans are beaten there are not going to be any revolutions. Britain and America will occupy Germany, and we—the Social Democrats—are going to administer it. There are not going to be any public meetings or associations or newspapers allowed except those that we control. If the Communists or Reds try something on, they will be shot. There's not going to be any nonsense about socialisation or workers' control. And if the Russians try to interfere, they will get what's coming to them. If they dare to enter Germany, it will mean war."

The reader may have his own opinion as to the likelihood of these amiable intentions being realised. But the fact is that this Social Democratic leader (many rank-and-file Social Democrats would quite certainly repudiate his views with horror and disgust) was only blurting out what Lord Vansittart, with his superior diplomatic skill and perspicacity, must understand to be the logical consequence in practice of his theories, were they put into effect.

What then can it look forward to in Germany, when the Nazi armies are smashed? It can look forward and it must give encouragement to a mass settlement of accounts with the Nazis, the militarists, the Junkers, the war profiteers, the murderers of every kind at home and in the occupied countries—that kind of plebeian settlement of accounts which the French

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people carried out in 1793, and which ought to have taken place in Germany long ago. All the stinking rottenness of medievalism carefully preserved by the Prussian State—that combination of big business and big landed interests meeting on the common ground of militarism, must be destroyed and burned out. That job can be done completely only by the Germans themselves, although the Allies can and will start it by their victories. To do that job does not require in its first stages the existence of a powerful opposition party in Germany to-day, or even a very clear political programme in the heads of the masses who carry it out. But in their very disillusionment, rage, and merciless revenge will be born the seeds of wider political understanding, and the first steps taken therefore in genuine democratic evolution.

This is already beginning. The Manifesto of the Free Germany National Committee, formed in Moscow at a conference of prisoners of war and other German anti-Fascist leaders on July 12 and 13, shows it. The Manifesto calls for:—

Our aim is for a free Germany. This means a strong democratic power which will have nothing in common with the overthrown German regime, a democracy which will mercilessly, radically suppress all attempts of any kind in the nature of new plots against its own people or against European peace.

Our aim is the complete abolition of all laws based on national, or racial, hatred, of all the laws imposed on our people by the Hitlerite regime; the abolition of all the measures introduced by the Hitlerite Government against freedom and human dignity; the restoration and extension of the political rights and social gains of the working people; freedom of speech, press, organisation, conscience and religious faith; freedom of economy, trade and artisanship; the guaranteed right to labour and legally acquired property; the return to their legal owners of the property stolen by the Fascist rulers; the confiscation of the property of those responsible for the war and of war speculators; exchange of commodities with other countries as the natural condition for guaranteeing national welfare; the immediate release of the victims of Hitlerite terror, and material compensation for the loss they have sustained; a just and merciless trial of those guilty of the war, the inciters and their accomplices, all those who plunged Germany into the abyss and branded her with shame, but, at the same time, amnesty for all those adherents of Hitler who recant in time and join in the movement for a free Germany.

Housing—in War and Peace

by J. R. CAMPBELL

FOUR things have aggravated the housing shortage in Great Britain: (1) the virtual abandonment of new construction during the war; (2) 250,000 houses rendered uninhabitable by bombing; (3) the concentration of population in the centres of war industry; and (4) the formation of new families. To give every family in Britain a house at this moment would necessitate the building of 500,000 new houses.

As a result of this shortage abuses connected with sub-letting have grown to an enormous extent. Decayed bourgeois houses, usually situated in neighbourhoods in the centre of a city, where the amenities are deteriorating, are rented by a sub-letter, who divides them up and lets them room by room or flat by flat at enormously enhanced rents. There is a typical example from the Townhead ward in Glasgow. A tenant rented an eight-roomed house at £50 per year, divided it up and sub-let it at £215 per year to nine sub-tenants. No structural alterations are made to such houses and the tenants are forced to use the same kitchen, usually the only place in the house where water can be drawn and cooking facilities exist. There is supposed to be some control of sub-letting by the local authorities, but in practice this is never exercised.

Then there is the associated racket of renting furnished rooms. All over Britain workers on essential war work are paying £2 or £2 10s. for two badly furnished small rooms.

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War Time Measures

What can be done to end this blood-sucking? Firstly, all available housing space must be utilised. The Secretary of State for Scotland, Mr. Thomas Johnston, gave the Glasgow Corporation power to take over every unoccupied house and such unoccupied offices and shops as can be transformed into housing accommodation. He also authorised the rehabilitation of houses previously condemned. The cost of operating these measures is to be borne by the Government. An extension of this suggestion to other areas would be useful.

The local authorities should be given power to control all subletting. This should include (1) the requisitioning of all empty houses, whether furnished or otherwise; (2) the taking over all sub-let houses and the fixing of rents for them; (3) the setting up by the local authorities of a rent court, which will fix rent for all sub-lets, furnished apartments, etc.

With the completion of the present military and air force installations on which they are engaged, it should be possible to employ more building workers on housing. Extended plans should be ready to employ necessary numbers of building workers when their present war jobs cease.

Two questions of paramount importance arise from the recent experience of agricultural workers' cottages. It is clear that there is lack of co-ordination between the Government departments concerned with housing. The Ministries of Health, of Works, of Town and Country Planning, of Labour, and the inevitable Treasury, all have their say with regard to the planning of housing. The departmental tug-of-war can lead to unnecessary delays unless there is streamlined co-ordination at the top.

More disquieting still is the vastly increased cost of housing. Most of the tenders for the building of the 3,000 agricultural workers' cottages have been higher than anticipated. The result is that the Ministry of Works circulated to local authorities plans for a cheaper type of cottage, which eliminate many of the progressive features in the original Ministry of Health plans.

When Mr. Roy King, President of the House Builders Association of Great Britain, informs us that "the £700 freehold house of the 1935-1939 years will run to something in the region of £1,500, *and may even lack some of the amenities of its pre-war predecessor*," it is clear that the question of cost must be gone into very carefully.

Building contractors have been "making hay while the sun shines" on Government war contracts and it may be that they see no reason why they should not continue to do so on housing contracts. The Government must therefore be prepared to institute a system of costing and control of all building materials and all building contracts. Another check would be provided by the employment of building labour directly by the Works Departments of the local councils, which would undertake their own building operations.

Such direct labour schemes have not in the past been a universal success. There are backward types of workers (not only among builders) who believe that the fact of their being employed by a municipality or a co-operative society, is by itself a justification for going more slowly than usual. On the other hand, some municipal officials failed to intelligently co-operate with the workers. We believe, however, that the war-time development of production committees and site committees points a way out of the difficulties. If the local authorities could build up a labour force in which the influence of class-conscious workers was strong, then good production committees could be established on the various jobs. By these means, direct labour schemes could be made a success and the local authorities would be provided with a valuable check on the prices tendered by contractors.

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Peace Time Building

Now to the post-war situation. Local authorities are at the present moment being asked to be ready with a year's plan of housebuilding to be commenced immediately the war ends. In most cases they are elaborating such a plan, which consists mainly in the resumption of such schemes of house-building as halted at the beginning of the war.

Some of the larger municipalities are elaborating tentative plans for the rebuilding of their town or city. Obviously, the rebuilding of the bombed areas of a city must be treated in relation to a broader plan. Not only the bombed sites but the surrounding section of the city have to be taken into consideration if there is going to be any effective rebuilding. But the plans will remain tentative until the Government has decided what its policy with regard to the control of land is going to be. The Uthwatt report, which suggests the vesting of rights of land development in the public authorities, has been in its hands for ten months and no one knows whether it is prepared to accept it or not. There are land speculators, who by buying up land for speculative purposes, are publicly backing their belief that the Government will not introduce any serious policy of land control.

Next in importance is the fixing by the Government of building priorities. To many building contractors before the war, such municipal contracts as they had possessed a low priority as compared with private contracts. The best of their attention and the most efficient workers were lavished on the new cinemas, bank offices, luxury flats and hire-purchase houses, on which the major building activities of private enterprise between the wars were concentrated.

We cannot allow such a scramble for priority to take place after the war. The building of houses to rent, of new schools and hospitals, must be given priority over luxury cinemas and shops.

There will be such a pressing demand for houses in the immediate post-war years that the question will arise whether it is possible by the use of alternative materials and pre-fabrication to build houses quicker than can be done by the old brick upon brick method.

Big claims are being made as to the possibility of constructing artistic houses with all the latest amenities out of the light metals or of specially treated wood. Firms engaged in the manufacture of aeroplane wings seem to be doing some research in this connection. The mere suggestion has provoked a cry of "sardine tins," and "we refuse to be canned like peas." This can be dangerous conservatism.

It is impossible for those interested in the solution of the housing shortage to start shrieking "there is nothing like bricks," any more than we can shout, "Long live the good old hansom cab."

But certain elementary things must be insisted upon. The first is that the use of alternative materials must not involve any deterioration of housing standards, both with regard to living space and to aesthetic considerations. The second is that the labour employed, either in the factory or the building-site, must be guaranteed the current building wages as a minimum and be organised in the building workers Unions. The third is that the firms engaged in this time of construction come together with the rest of the building industry, under a common public control with regard to their efficiency, their costs and their profits.

Subject to these safeguards, there is no reason why there should not be fairly widespread experimentation with houses built from alternative materials.

In any case, there is bound to be a widespread pre-fabrication of many of the parts of the normal brick house and an increasing amount of standardisation (which need not mean uninspired ugliness) of household fittings. We need not oppose this, but should see that it results neither in shoddy workmanship nor the creation of new classes of underpaid labour.

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An additional reason for bringing the experimentalists, along with the rest of the industry, under some form of public control is connected with the need for long-term planning.

Four million houses within ten years is the minimum programme that must be achieved. This will require the building up of the labour force in the industry to 1,250,000 workers. The war-time gains of the industry—the guaranteed week and holidays with pay—will have to be carried over. There will have to be an intensive training of the new workers taken into the industry. That is why, if experiments in the use of new materials prove to be of enduring value, we cannot allow new methods of construction to grow up outside of the industry. On the contrary, the workers employed by those firms must be regarded as part of the total labour force required, and training in the new construction methods must be available to all in the industry.

The building worker is entitled to expect continuity of employment. Between the wars he was the victim of a succession of governments and health ministers, each with a different policy. At one time there was hectic expansion in the industry, at another time equally frantic contraction. Such a grotesque misuse of the labour force of this great industry is intolerable. We want the steady pursuit of a long-term rebuilding programme which will give us towns that we might be proud to live in.

There is just one further point. Ought the state and the municipalities to confine themselves purely to building working-class houses, leaving the lower middle class and professional people to be the prey of the speculative builder providing houses on the instalment plan, or the owners of jerry-built luxury flats let at exorbitant rents? We do not think so. Large numbers of professional people started to buy their houses on the instalment plan, not because they wanted to become house-owners, but because no one was willing to cater for them but the speculative builder with his site-purchase methods. If they could have been provided with the type of house they desired at a monthly rent, they would gladly have done so.

There is no reason why the local authorities cannot cater for such citizens. True, they cannot expect their rents to be subsidised, but they can be guaranteed a house of good quality, whose rent does not carry inflated profit or interest charges.

* * * * *

If we cannot leave the worker to the mercy of the uncontrolled rapacity of private enterprise we ought not to leave any other citizen. If planning is to become a reality, the control of middle class suburban expansion is a necessary element of it. There is no reason, however, why such planning should be merely restrictive. It should have the positive feature of protecting the professional man and his family from the rapacity of the ground landlord, the usurer, and the speculative builder.

The Editor of LABOUR MONTHLY will be very glad to receive contributions in the form of finished articles or of suggestions and data for articles. The customary proviso must be made that no responsibility is undertaken for manuscripts sent to him nor can he promise to enter into correspondence regarding contributions not accepted.

The articles in the LABOUR MONTHLY are indexed in the International Index to Periodicals, New York City, U.S.A., as well as in the annual index in each December issue.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: 12 months 7s., 6 months 3s. 6d. Postage paid. Two weeks' notice is required for change of address.

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Trades Union Congress

by PETER KERRIGAN

THE amount of time and attention directed to trade union policy at the recent Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party is the measure of the magnitude of the part being played by the unions in this anti-Fascist war. A recapitulation of the heads of that discussion indicates the scope of the problems now facing the unions: wartime changes; wage policy; production (with emphasis on problems of factory, pit and site Production Committees as well as District Production machinery); trade union workshop organisation; trade unions and legislation; international trade union unity; co-ordination of trade union policy; trade unions and the Labour Party; trade union amalgamation, etc.

To ensure that the unions play the part that the period demands, the difference in this war from the last requires to be brought home to all trade unionists. Without a clear understanding of what is involved in "the victory of the United Nations" as the counter to a Fascist triumph there can be no reality in any trade union policy whether that policy is what was thrashed out in London during July 3 and 4, or what will be considered by the Trades Union Congress at Southport next month. In few other spheres does Fascism so clearly reveal its character as in the utter destruction of the trade unions and their workshops organisation which in each case has followed its successes.

The pre-eminent need is to get this fact clearly understood by every possible trade union member or potential member. Lidice in Czechoslovakia will never be forgotten by the mining trade unionists of Britain. The more hatred this, and similar happenings arouses among trade unionists, the more certain can we be that they will not only understand the character of this fight but will exert their giant strength to ensure speedy victory over the hated enemy.

This article is being written before the final date for resolutions for the preliminary agenda of the T.U.C., but it is certain that Congress will require to face many of the issues discussed by the Communist Congress, and it is in no way presumptuous to suggest that the delegates to the T.U.C. could, with profit to the movement, study the approach made at the London Congress.

By September there should be between eight-and-a-half and nine millions trade unionists in Britain, but there must be something like 20,000,000 eligible to be organised in trade unions or professional associations in this country. What is called for here is a campaign for 100 per per cent. trade union organisation that will bring into play the whole union resources, including their district and workshop organisations and the trades councils. In respect to women trade unionists, it demands an approach that sees the problem as one to be solved by a co-operative effort on the part of all the unions concerned and an understanding that women are an asset to the unions.

The issue of trade union structure on which last year a resolution by the National Union of Railwaymen was defeated, is likely to be raised by the N.U.D.A.W. Since last year important developments have occurred. The M.F.G.B. accepted the principle of one Miners' Union and it is possible the Miners' Federation Conference in July will decide on the actual structure of one miners' union for Britain. The closer co-operation between the three railway unions has resulted in positive gains in the shape of the speedy settlement of their wages demand by the award of a further 4s. 6d. per week to railwaymen: and this unity on wages points to further extensions. The A.E.U. is now operating with the Confederation Unions on wages; while the National Union of Foundry Workers' negotiations on amalgamation

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with the two Scottish Foundry Unions is in an advanced stage. These are but some of the indications of a possible more favourable result on this occasion.

Trade Union and Trades Disputes Act (1927)

Year after year Congress has passed resolutions demanding the repeal of this anti-trade union Act; but this year Congress is likely to be asked to accept the application for membership of the T.U.C. by certain of the unions debarred by the Act. The General Council is recommending acceptance. If the matter comes up in this form then, in defiance of the Act, Congress will back the General Council and the unions concerned. Already certain trades councils have accepted the local applications for affiliation from the Union of Postal Workers. The Tory Die-hard opposition in Parliament appears to be hardening on the matter, although the justice of the claim for amendment of the Act is conceded by all progressive elements. It is important in the present circumstances that complete agreement be reached between the Parliamentary Labour Party and the T.U.C. on policy, so that success can be achieved and no weakening of national unity take place. Connected with this issue is the question of the political levy.

Circular 16.

An increasing number of trade unions have gone on record against the operation of Circular 16. This notorious black circular, discriminating against Communists acting as delegates or holding office in trades councils in England and Wales, has had effects beyond the trades councils. In face of the magnificent service rendered to the trade union movement by men like Arthur Horner, Abe Moffat and Will Pearson of the Miners, Joe Scott, Wal Hannington and George Crane of the Engineers, Sam Henderson and Bert Papworth of the Transport Workers, Tim Burns of the Locomotive men; and by hundreds of other executive and district and full-time trade unionists' officials who are Communists; and by all those who, as shop stewards or otherwise, are doing their magnificent work in the factories, this circular has become an obstacle to the proper functioning of the trade unions themselves. Its withdrawal by this year's T.U.C. would be a great step forward and welcomed by the widest sections of trade unionists.

Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Unity.

Since last Congress, Sir Walter Citrine, with T.U.C. representatives, has visited the United States and is at the moment in the Soviet Union for meetings and discussions on the work of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee. At last Congress, where the setting up of the Anglo-American Trade Union Committee was reported, there was regret at the failure to get a Committee representative of the Polish, Soviet and American Unions established. It would appear that the more recent visit of Sir Walter Citrine to the States has not resulted in the C.I.O. Unions being brought into direct contact with the T.U.C. The A.F. of L. still stands out on this matter and unless there is some development not yet revealed, also hangs on to its outworn position of opposition to direct contact with the Soviet trade unions. This may be one of the issues under discussion in the present Moscow sessions of the Anglo-Soviet Trade Union Committee.

Production.

The recent National Committee of the A.E.U. adopted a very comprehensive resolution on production for submission to the T.U.C. It proposes that the General Council shall approach the appropriate authorities to propose (*a*) Direct allocation of contracts through the medium of the Regional Boards. (*b*) Compulsory establishment of properly functioning production and efficiency committees in productive industries and transport. (*c*) Extension of payment by results with Government guarantee against cuts in rates because of greater earnings through increased output. (*d*) Replacement of monopoly representatives on Government Control Boards by independent chairmen pre-

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siding over reorganised Boards equally representative of employers, employees and consumers. (*e*) Greater facilities for factory canteens and improved transport adapted to the shift system prevailing in each industry. (*f*) Extension of part-time working, increase in number of nursery schools and creches, better shopping facilities. Adoption of principle of equal pay for equal work. Provision for more rapid promotion of women to higher skilled occupation to speed up entry of women into essential industries.

It will be seen from the foregoing that most of the problems related to improving the running of industry, stepping up production, and greatly increasing the number of women in war industry, are embraced in the proposals. There are certain other factors to which attention needs to be directed. The question of working hours, specially in the case of young people, requires consideration, so that production and health do not suffer from working excessively long hours which not only harm health, but, in fact, reduce production.

It is questionable whether the T.U.C. will make a fundamental examination of wages policy in war time, facing up to all problems of war economy, including price fixing, extension of rationing, increase in production of food and utility goods, and on this basis a realistic wages policy. Already, however, as the example of the Engineering and Shipbuilding industry shows, the tendency of wages is towards consolidation of war advances into the basic rates of wages, and raising wages of the lower paid sections of workers. Coupled with this goes the fight for the rate for the job for women. The biggest step forward in this respect would be to ensure that all women entrants into war industries get as a starting rate the same wage as the adult male labourer. The absolutely magnificent job done by the women of Britain represents a revolution in industry that we do not yet appreciate, particularly in view of the obstacles that have had, and are yet to be, overcome. One of the greatest barriers would fall if the rate for the job was completely established.

Youth.

Together with this goes the question of trade union policy for the youth. Already pressure is increasing for the operation of the Foster Report and a minimum wage for youth in mining, while the A.E.U. have reaffirmed their wage for age demand for youth in engineering and shipbuilding. What is required for the future of the trade union movement is the fight for a new era of modern apprenticeship and training. The schemes proposed in building, mining, engineering and cotton indicate the way forward. The T.U.C. would do well to explore thoroughly this whole question and see what machinery requires to be created to solve the problem. The results would be worth it.

The question on "Our Lads" will be another item that will cause considerable attention. The Government policy for youth training will have to be considered in light of its "quality" in preventing blind alley occupation and in line with the needs of the various unions. The issue of wages rates to be paid will also have to come in the picture, likewise a general policy of the T.U.C. to be directed to the "Service of Youth" scheme and such issues as health, fitness and recreation, and other measures that will ensure to the younger generation a future place in society.

Education.

The Government educational proposals are at last published: and it will be for the T.U.C. to judge these proposals in the light of the programme adopted last year, especially with regard to the aim of a unified school system and the abolition of dual control.

India.

The recent annual general meeting of the National Union of Railwaymen adopted unanimously a resolution which

views with concern the present deadlock in India and urges the Government to immediately open up negotiations with the principal national repre-

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sentatives of India with a view to the establishment of an Indian National Government.

This resolution raises an issue which will be of vital concern to delegates to the T.U.C. Should the T.U.C. reach a decision to press for negotiations for a settlement in India, it is obvious that this would play a very important part in assisting such a settlement, in drawing close friendship between the British and Indian people and in a total strengthening of the war effort.

Essential Work Order, etc.

In respect to legislation, one of the outstanding things is the need for amendment of the Essential Work Order to make the findings of Appeal Tribunals binding on the National Service officers and also to guarantee that workers who have won their appeal against dismissal will, in fact, be reinstated in the job again. The unions have been facing this difficulty in a number of instances since last Congress and it is certain to feature in the report of the General Council if it has not been placed on the Agenda by some of the unions.

The other issue involving legislation is the growing demand that all employers shall recognise the appropriate trades unions in an industry. This is not a demand for compulsory trades unions but for the enforcement by the Government of recognition of the unions at a time when the unions have agreed not to utilise the strike weapon, that previously was often used in such cases.

A very great deal depends on how the delegates and the General Council approach the problems of this year's T.U.C. At the Sixteenth Congress of the Communist Party we said:—

> Our whole aim in this respect should be to create trade unionists in the fullest sense, trade unionists accepting every responsibility for all the tasks of the union and imbued with the highest desire to serve and make still more powerful this tremendous force which was born over two centuries ago in these islands.

With such an approach by the Congress in September we need have no fears for the future.

The Kayyur Heroes

by P. C. JOSHI

[*We print here the account given by the Secretary of the Communist Party of India of his interview with the Kayyur Heroes on the eve of their execution.*—ED. L.M.]

WE are the most influential party in Malabar. There the Red Flag is not confined to towns alone, but flies proudly over hundreds of villages. An overwhelming majority of our 3,000 members are sons of peasants, and out of them sixteen are serving life sentences, four were awaiting the gallows. When the Party Centre asked me to go to Malabar as its representative for our Provincial Conference, it came as the fulfilment of a long-cherished desire to see with my own eyes Communism in action in our countryside. When the Party Centre also commissioned me to meet and give our last greetings to the Kayyur comrades, also to go to Kayyur and pay the Party's homage to the families of these four Party brothers, I knew I was going on an errand of honour.

As soon as the Party Conference concluded at Calicut we rushed to Cannanore, covered a rally of 6,000 workers and citizens in the midday sun and amidst deafening shouts of "Kayyur Sakhakal Zindabad," motored straight to the Central Jail. For a long distance the echo of the slogan followed us. Krishna Pillai, our Malabar secretary, had announced that we were going to the jail!

We pulled up before the jail gate. It looked like any other jail, and the iron gate was opened for us just the same as everywhere else. We bent ourselves low and passed through, signed up the register and were taken charge of by the jailer.

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We went round and round the gravel path, till another small gate opened into the condemned cells. There they were in the first four cells, all standing at ease, pulling themselves to attention, and their clenched fists went up as they said "Lal Salam." After passing in front of all the four cells I came back to the centre and looked up.

They looked so young and clean, their bodies had grown thin after a whole year inside the condemned cells, but light and courage shone on their faces. The very first glance convinced me that these lads will mount the gallows with a firm step and "COMMUNIST PARTY ZINDABAD" on their lips.

We had carried a big packet of post-cards and letters, written in all the languages of our vast land. They were greetings to them, written in an informal and intimate manner by workers, peasants, students of all ages, and of both sexes, from all over. They smiled broadly when they saw them. The jailer was bothered how he would get them translated to censor them, and felt relieved when I told him that the English translation of most of them was attached therewith.

They understood neither English nor Hindusthani and I could not talk Malayalam. With the jailer's permission, Pillai translated me sentence by sentence. The flood of tears over my cheeks made the flow of words out of the mouth possible, or I would just have got choked up and collapsed. This is the substance of what I told them on behalf of the Party.

"The Party is prouder of you four than it is of any of its members. You came to us when we were mere hundreds. To-day we are over 9,000 Party members and 8,000 candidates. All 17,000 of us vow to you that we will hold high the banner you held so worthily and continue fighting the battle you fought so heroically.

"You are dying for an immortal cause, of freedom and prosperity for our country and the whole world. Ours is the cause of justice; it must triumph; you are giving your lives to see that it shall triumph. We know you are fulfilling your dream, not dying.

"You, our beloved four, are being lost to the Party. But it is the work and example of comrades like you that have made the Party what it is to-day. When you joined the Party in Malabar it was a group of young patriots; to-day we are the major political party in your province. All over the country the best sons of the people are joining the Party. Wherever the Party is known, your names are uttered with love and veneration. Patriotic young men and women consider it an honour to join the Party, because it bred young martyrs like you.

"The Party is not losing you, but gaining four martyrs. Let them send you four to the gallows, that we can't help to-day. But inspired by you four we will win four hundred, four thousand . . . new Party members. This they can't prevent, this we will work for. And rest assured, comrades, we will win. As our cause is immortal, so is its instrument, our Party. Persecution never weakened, but only strengthened us. Your martyrdom brings not only glory, but strength to the Party. No Communist can desire a better end.

"You are being lost to your families. We know when you joined the Party you accepted the people as your parents and worked to see that no Indian father or mother suffers from what your own did. Rest assured, comrades, that we, all 17,000 of us, will look after your families as our own. We will do all we can to make your parents feel that the Party is their family, every Party member their son.

"To get the chance to meet you has been the greatest day of my life and bring you greetings from the Party you love more than your life. I am going to your village from here and will meet your families. Is there any message for them?"

"Buck them up. Ask them not to worry," all of them said together.

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"Anything else?" I asked.

"You have already said all that was welling up inside us," one of them said.

"No, no, you must speak as long as there is time for the interview. Comrades outside will tear me up if I don't report back every word of what you say. I have a good memory and I will carry it all back," I said, trying to smile.

Jailor Saheb began looking at his wrist watch. I asked them to hurry up.

KUNHAMBU, who was in the first cell, began:—

"The Party made me capable of doing whatever I did for the people. If the Party thinks I have done my duty, that is all I ever desired."

APPU said:—

"You have brought great news of the growing strength of the Party. We will now mount the gallows with added strength. We joined the Party to fight and die for the freedom of the country."

CHIRUKANDAN said:—

"We are only four kisan sons. But India's millions are kisans. We can be hanged, but they can't be destroyed. This is what has sustained us all through. These letters from all over the country make us feel sorry that we can't live longer to serve them. We have known no other regret. If we had more lives we would have died over and over again for our cause." He had taken a leading part in two kisan struggles.

ABU BAKER was in the last cell:—

"We have drawn inspiration from the life of our martyrs. We never dreamt that we will share the honour of being one of them. Tell all the Comrades that we will mount the gallows fearlessly. My mother is very old. Cheer her up. My brothers are very young. Educate them for Party work. I was the eldest member of the family. They have nobody left to look after them."

The moment he stopped the jailer said that time was up. I asked his permission to shake hands with them. He agreed. Not only the iron grating of the cell, but the verandah had separated us from them. Jail rules!

It was a thrill to go near them and clasp their hands warmly. They had been volunteers, and, immediately after the handshake, they instinctively drew up to attention and gave the Lal Salam with their clenched fists.

Appu held on to my hands a few moments longer and quietly whispered "Comrade," but no other word came out of him. I looked into his eyes—they were moist. I looked away, across the verandah —there was a sort of flower bed. Without a thought, what was inside me got formed into a sentence.

"Those flowers are perishable. You, Comrades, are the flowers of humanity that will never perish."

Pillai promptly translated me. Young Appu blushed deeply.

When it came to Abu Baker I did not feel like letting his hand go. I thought of the great Moplahs and their heroic past. They had contributed one out of the four martyrs. And there are Hindu patriots who doubt the patriotic *bona fides* of our Muslim brothers. As I tarried, he went on repeating: "Lal Salam, Comrade!" He had a very finely chiselled face and patriotic fervour glowed in his eyes.

As I finished, clenched fists went up again from both sides, and we marched out with much lighter step than we had marched in. We all felt easy within ourselves, brimming with pride for having comrades like these.

When we were left to ourselves, Sundarayya, who had been silent all through, sunk in thought, spoke up: "You were supposed to buck them up, and they have bucked you up instead."

The only answer I could give was: "They are our martyrs, they need no bucking up. I am their comrade being left behind. I needed it and got it."

The car sped its way to the railway station, where we had to catch the train to Charvattur and then go up the river on

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boat to Kayyur, where the families of these comrades were expecting us the same evening. I will write about my visit to Kayyur next week.

I finished my Malabar tour on the 26th and at Calicut our Madras Secretary Mohan's telegram awaited me: "Whitehall refuses to intervene, date of execution will be fixed shortly."

As I am writing this, a comrade from Malabar has come with the news that these four comrades were hanged on the 29th morning. The previous night they learnt that they would have to walk to the gallows the next morning. They spent the night singing in chorus patriotic songs and shouting slogans, "COMMUNIST PARTY ZINDABAD" being the most frequent and the loudest. Not one prisoner, political or non-political, slept that night in the Cannamore Central Prison.

Early in the morning, 3,000 citizens gathered at the jail gates demanding their bodies. The request was refused and they were asked to disperse.

Malabar kisans produced immortal sons like these young heroes. Our Party nurses patriots who take martyrdom easy, with a smiling face. We dip our Red Banner to our Kayyur martyrs.

[*The Fund for the relief of the dependants of the four Kuyyur peasants now stands at a little over £300. The target is £1,000. Donations from persons or organisations should be sent to the Treasurer, Kayyur Fund, c/o Colonial Information Bureau, 9, Southampton Place, London, W.C.1.*—ED. L.M.]

Frederick Engels on Guerilla Warfare

[*During the Franco-Prussian War of* 1870-71, *Frederick Engels wrote, for the London* Pall Mall Gazette, *a series of politico-military articles on the course of the war. When, after the defeat at Sedan, the* franc-tireurs, *or partisans, became active, and the Prussian military command of the day, with its customary brutality, took action against these "irregulars," Engels devoted several articles to a justification of guerilla warfare. In them he branded as barbaric the measures taken against it by the Prussian military leaders of the day. The following passages were written November* 11, 1870.]

IN the course of the last six weeks, the character of the war has markedly changed. The regular armies of France have disappeared. The struggle is being carried on by recently mobilised troops whose inexperience makes them more or less irregular. Wherever they attempt to mass and fight in the open, they are easily defeated; but when they fight under the cover of villages and towns equipped with barricades and embrasures, it becomes evident that they are capable of offering serious resistance. They are encouraged to carry on this type of struggle, with night surprise attacks and other methods of guerilla warfare, by proclamations and orders from the Government, which also advises the population of the district in which they operate to give them every possible assistance.

If the enemy possessed sufficient troops to occupy the whole of the country, this resistance could be easily broken. But for this, up to the surrender of Metz, he has not had the strength. The ubiquitous "four Uhlans" are no longer able to ride into a village or town outside their own lines, demanding absolute subjection to their orders, without incurring the risk of captivity or death. Requisitioning detachments have to be accompanied by escorting troops, and single companies or squadrons quartering in a village must guard against night attacks, and also, when they are on the march, against attacks from the rear. The German positions are surrounded by a belt of disputed territory, and it is just here that popular resistance makes itself felt most seriously.

In order to break this popular resistance, the Germans are resorting to a type of martial law that is as obsolete as it is barbaric. They act on the principle that any town or village in the defence of which one or more inhabitants have taken part, have fired on German troops or generally assisted the French—any such town or village is to be burnt down. Further, any man found carrying weapons, and not in their eyes a regular soldier, is to

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be summarily shot. Where there is any suspicion that a considerable section of the population of a town has been guilty of such a misdeed, all men capable of bearing arms are to be massacred forthwith. For the past six weeks this policy has been pitilessly carried out, and is still at this moment in full sway. One cannot open a single German newspaper without coming on half a dozen reports of such military executions; these are made to appear as a matter of course, as a simple process of military justice, carried out with salutary firmness by "honest soldiers" against "cowardly assassins and robbers." There is, of course, no disorder, no looting, no raping of women, no irregularity. Indeed no. Everything is done systematically, and by order. The condemned village is surrounded, the inhabitants driven out, the provisions confiscated, the houses set alight. The real or imaginary culprits are brought before a court-martial, where a brief, final confession and half a dozen bullets are their certain lot.

It is no exaggeration to say that wherever the German flying columns march into the heart of France, their path is all too often marked with fire and blood. It is hardly sufficient, in this year of 1870, to claim that this is legitimate warfare, and that the actions of civilians or others not immediately recognisable as soldiers are the equivalent of banditry, and must be put down with fire and sword. Such an argument might have been valid in the day of Louis XIV or Frederick II, when there was no kind of fighting other than that of regular armies. But ever since the American War of Independence and up to the American War of Secession, it has been the rule rather than the exception, in Europe as well as in America, for the people to take part in war. Wherever a people has allowed itself to be subjected for no other reason than that its armies have been incapable of offering resistance, it has earned general contempt as a nation of cowards; and wherever a people has energetically waged such irregular warfare, the invader soon found it impossible to carry through the obsolete law of blood and fire. The English in America, the French under Napoleon in Spain, and in 1848, the Austrians in Italy and Hungary, were very soon compelled to treat popular resistance as an entirely legitimate form of warfare. They were compelled to do so from the fear of reprisals against their own prisoners. . . .

Of all the armies in the world, the Prussian army should have been the last to revive these practices. In 1806, Prussia collapsed solely because nowhere in the country was there any sign of such a national spirit of resistance. After 1807, the reorganisers of the administration and the army did everything in their power to resurrect this spirit. It was at this time that Spain furnished a glorious example of how a nation can resist an invading army. The military leaders of Prussia all pointed to it as an example worthy of the emulation of their compatriots. Scharnhorst, Gneisenau, Clausewitz—all were of the same opinion. Gneisenau even went to Spain himself to take part in the struggle against Napoleon. The whole military system that was subsequently introduced in Prussia was an attempt to mobilise popular resistance against the enemy, in so far as this was possible at all in an absolute monarchy. Not only had every fit man to join the army and serve in the reserves (the *Landwehr*) up to his fortieth year; boys between seventeen and twenty and men between forty and sixty-six were also included in the *levée en masse*, or mass conscription, in the final reserves (the *Landsturm*), whose function it was to rise in the rear and on the flanks of the enemy, to interfere with his movements, and to cut off his supplies and his couriers; they were expected to use any weapons they could lay their hands on and to employ without distinction all available measures to harry the invader—"the more effective the measure the better"; nor was "any kind of uniform to be worn," so that the men of the *Landsturm* might at any moment resume their character of civilians, thus remaining unrecognised by the enemy.

This *Landsturm Order* of 1813, as the decree in question was called—its author being no other than Scharnhorst, the organiser of the Prussian Army—was drawn up in this spirit of irreconcilable national resistance, according to which all means are valid, and the most effective are the best. At that time, however, all this was to be done by the Prussians against the French; when the French chose to behave in precisely the same manner to-

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wards the Prussians, it was quite another matter. What had been patriotism in the one case became banditry and assassination in the other.

The fact is that the present Prussian Government are ashamed of this old, semi-revolutionary *Landsturm* Order, and by their actions in France seek to erase it from the memory. But the deliberate atrocities they themselves have committed in France will, instead, call it all the more to mind. The argument brought forward in favour of so despicable a method of waging war serves only as proof that, if the Prussian army has immeasurably improved since Jena, the Prussian Government, on the other hand, is ripening for the conditions that made Jena possible.

Thus wrote Engels seventy-three years ago: and his prophetic warning about another Jena was fulfilled. It happened in 1918. *To-day the peoples are fighting for their national freedom. In these struggles, the "irregulars" are in the forefront. Engels' warning again holds true: and what the end must be is not difficult to guess.*

Book Reviews

A Good List but a Poor Guide

Books on Soviet Russia, 1917—1942 (June). A bibliography and a Guide to Reading by Philip Grierson, M.A. (Methuen, pp. 354, 12*s*6*d*).

PARTICULARLY since Britain and the U.S.S.R. became allies in this war against Hitlerite Germany there has been a notable growth in Britain of serious interest in all aspects of Soviet life, and many have felt the need of a complete list of English books and pamphlets on the U.S.S.R. classified by subjects. This Mr. Grierson has now provided.

It is a pioneer work and one is not surprised, therefore, to find a few omissions and mistakes, but they are indeed remarkably few. For instance, the translation of Professor E. Tarle's "Bonaparte," published in 1937, is not included among the Soviet historical works available in English. Mr. Grierson wrongly states that Shestakov's History (1938) is "not available in English." The bibliographer includes a few French books where these are of outstanding importance or have no equivalent in English. It is, therefore, strange not to find Henri Barbusse's "Voice ce qu'on a fait de la Georgie" (1929) in this list. A certain number of books on the intervention and civil war period have escaped the net. Examples are: Ernst von Solomon's "Outlaws" (1931), dealing with the Anglo-German campaign against Soviet Latvia; Admiral Sir Walter Cowan's report on British naval activity in the Baltic (Fifth Supplement to the *London Gazette*, April 6, 1920); Colonel P. T. Etherton's "In the Heart of Asia" (1925), describing the anti-Bolshevik activities of the British Consul at Kashgar; J. M. Balfour's "Recent Happenings in Persia" (1922), important for Anglo-Soviet contacts on the shores of the Caspian in 1920-21; and the British official history of the Four Years' War, "Military Operations," of which the volume called "Mesopotamia: IV" contains material on the intervention in Transcaucasia and Turkestan. As Mr. Grierson notes (p. 171), "very little information is available" in English about conditions in Western Byelorussia and Western Ukraine in 1939-41; it is a pity, therefore, that he omits to mention Beatrice King's article in the *Anglo-Soviet Journal* for January, 1941. Again, although he records (p. 196) the Stalin-Howard interview in 1936, he supplies no reference. (It was published in No. 14 of 1936 volume of *International Press Correspondence*—which changed its title to *World News and Views* in 1938 and not in 1940, as here stated (p. 133). The date on which the first Soviet Republic of Latvia was forced by foreign arms to abandon Riga was May 22, 1919, and not March 22 (p. 48). Since Mr. Grierson has seen fit to include in his bibliography books and pamphlets published by or about the Communist International, it must be noted that he is wrong in stating (p. 137) that no report of the Fifth World Congress was published in Britain, and also in his statement (p. 138) that of the Sixth World Congress documents only the Programme of the Communist International and the thesis "Communism and the International Situation" were published separately here. (The thesis on "The Revolutionary Movement in the Colonies" was published as a pamphlet; and all the Sixth World Congress material is to be found, of course, in special numbers of *International Press Correspondence* of 1928.)

As a "guide to reading" Mr. Grierson's book is less useful, and has some serious faults. He tends to accept a number of anti-Soviet writers too much at their own valuation. (It is, e.g., misleading to describe A. Rosenberg's "History of Bolshevism" as "written from a Marxist standpoint.") He fails to warn his readers that such authors as Krivitsky and Valtin have been exposed as impostors. Works by Trotsky and his henchmen are described as "brilliant" and "well-informed," while many Communist publications are dismissed as "tendencious" or "unilluminating" or "partisan," merely, it would seem, because they are written from the Communist point of view.

BRIAN BOROUGH.

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Two Centuries of Labour Conditions

A Short History of Labour Conditions in Great Britain and the Empire, 1750 to the Present Day by Jurgen Kuczynski, Ph.D., F.S.S. (Frederick Muller, Ltd., London, 12*s*6*d*).

IT IS frequently claimed that capitalism has produced a vast improvement in the conditions of the workers. In his latest book Mr. Kuczynski submits this claim to a searching and critical analysis and finds it wanting. He agrees that real wages have risen over the last hundred years, but points out that wages form only one aspect of labour conditions. Against increased wages and shorter hours we have to set the greater strain caused by increased intensity of work and the greater insecurity caused by mass unemployment and recurrent wars.

Mr. Kuczynski's survey covers nearly two hundred years, from the beginning of industrial capitalism to the present day. During the first hundred years, labour conditions were very greatly *worsened*. Real wages fell, hours of work were lengthened, and attempts at working-class organisation met with violent suppression. Between 1850 and 1900 real wages increased, but the author concludes that probably "not until the last third of the nineteenth century did real wages reach the level they occupied at the beginning of the industrial revolution." Hours of work were also reduced as the result of successful struggles by the workers, but, as against this, the intensity of labour was increased. From 1900 real wages fell again until after the end of the last war. In the years preceding this war they managed to rise slightly above the 1900 level, but this increase was more than offset by the increase in unemployment.

One of the most interesting of the author's many tables is one showing the changes that have taken place in the *relative* position of the workers and capitalists. Capitalist apologists make great play of the fact that the share of wages in the national income has remained stable for a long time; but he points out that this is misleading, since it ignores the fact that the number of workers has increased relatively to the number of capitalists. He therefore compares the growth of industrial production per head with the growth of real wages and shows that over the last seventy years the latter increased by only 50 per cent., while the former has more than doubled. The workers' *relative* position has therefore worsened.

The author concludes that while in some respects labour conditions have improved, in other respects, which are generally ignored by economists and statisticians, they have undoubtedly deteriorated. The author has performed a valuable service in stressing these adverse developments, which he considers outweigh the favourable ones; but since the weight to be given them is not statistically verifiable, his estimate is necessarily subjective and I myself would hesitate to accept it. In spite of this, however, the book provides the most comprehensive review of the development of labour conditions in Britain that has yet appeared, and one which is likely to become a "standard work."

Nor does the author confine himself to conditions in Britain. In the second half of his book he gives us a history of labour conditions in each of the Dominions, together with some notes on food and health in the Colonial Empire. These chapters contain a mass of interesting information, much of which is not readily available elsewhere.

The statistical appendices, which throughout the book are given at the end of each chapter so as not to weary the general reader, are in themselves invaluable to all students of the working-class movement.

FRANK VERULAM.

Publications Received

Books

Beggar My Neighbour by Lionel Fielden (Secker & Warburg, 3*s*6*d*, 128 pp.).
Russian Grammar by Louis Segal, M.A., Ph.D. (Lund Humphries, 7*s*6*d*, 230 pp.).
Four Fighting Years (Published on behalf of Czech Min. of Foreign Affairs) (Hutchinson & Co., 7*s*6*d*, 204 pp.).
The Problem of India by K. S. Shelvanker (PENGUIN SPECIAL, 9*d*, 208 pp.).
Robert Dale Owen—A Biography by Richard Wm. Leopold (Oxford University Press, 25*s*6*d*, 470 pp.).
Social Security edited by W. A. Robson (Allen & Unwin, 15*s*, 448 pp.).
The Birth of New China by Arthur Clegg (Lawrence & Wishart, 3*s*6*d*, 144 pp.).

To Readers.

The cut in our circulation has financial consequences. Attention is drawn to the needs of the Fund.

See cover pages ii and iii and subscription form on back page of cover.

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That required minimum has not been reached this month. Only once this year have we reached the hundred mark, and the need is of absolutely regular recurrence. It is just impossible for us to tell our printer, or our landlord, or our Post Office, or our staff: *We are sorry, but we can't pay you this month.* No, the gap must be closed, and it is up to you, readers, friends and comrades, to close it.

We are continually amazed, and deeply moved, by the number of donations from people who really cannot easily afford it, and who must certainly deprive themselves to do so. There were the Old Age Pensioners we mentioned before; and now a letter from a soldier disabled since the last war, sending us 10s. Ten shillings! And he only gets 7s. a week, and is never out of a wheeled chair.

To be frank, old soldiers (and by that we mean old soldiers of the movement, not only of the last war), and present soldiers, are our firmest and most regular supporters. (Of course, that includes all H.M. Forces, all ranks up to Rear-Admiral.) There is a very great shortage of donations from factory workers, or if factory workers do send us money, they don't announce themselves as such. Can this be remedied? We know thousands of our readers are in the factories (are we not always receiving letters: "Please send us more LABOUR MONTHLY for the —— factory," and if possible we do so.) Even with the new, wafer-thin paper we cannot print enough copies to meet the demand; but this paper is very costly to manufacture, and, as it must be handled like egg-shells, very costly to print also.

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